How Kemal Pasha Adopted a Harem

A modern wedding in the palace where sultans of Turkey used to maintain their world-famous harem. . . . When one of Kemal's adopted daughters married a Turkish officer. . . . Kemal stands in the center, beside the bride . . . with his sister, Makbulle Hanoum, at his right, and two more of his adopted daughters next to her.

Turkey's unconquered liberator, now serving his third term as head of the new republic, is divorced from his one wife in approved modern manner, but his household is graced by five adopted daughters, whose often misunderstood position is here explained

ISTANBUL, TURKEY.

"THE Gazi is a ladies' man as well as a feminist" is emphatically stated by both friend and foe when the private life and character of Turkey's national hero is discussed.

"Gazi"—meaning "victorious"—is the title which the nation has assigned to Kemal Pasha, and he is rarely spoken of in any other form.

His admirers will recall the truly important part played by women in preparing a cultural background for the revolution, of which the idea spread just as rapidly in the harems of Istanbul and Smyrna as it did in the ranks of the army.

While no law was passed obliging women to wear hats and live in western fashion, the republic protects them from insult and the Gazi gives them every encouragement so as to have them partake in the life of the country and make use of the newly-established schools and cultural centers.

At the same time, others will inform you that Kemal Pasha has been a bad boy from his earliest youth and gave his poor mother no end of trouble. They will tell you that he was married to a young and beautiful woman belonging to one of Turkey's leading families, and that after three years his wife obtained a divorce.

"He is a ladies' man all right," it is ironically murmured. "No, he did not remarry, but what about his adopted daughters . . ."

The implication is obvious, and is given color by the tradition long associated with Turkey and by the fact that during the summer season the Gazi moves from Ankara to Istanbul, occuping the stately palace of Dolma Bagtche on the Bosphorus. All his household accompanies him, and naturally enough his adopted daughters live in the part of the palace which in days gone by was occupied by the Sultan's harem.

IT may be well to add that the word "harem" as it was used in Turkey in bygone days in no way possessed the significance which the west has generally understood it to imply. Polygamy, it is true, was admitted by the Moslem faith and consequently by the law, but it had almost disappeared in the great cities many years before the Turkish revolution.

The cost of living, apartment houses and increasing contacts with western countries made the ancient custom fall into disuse, although tradition still kept the women in seclusion and prevented them from emerging unveiled from their houses, or freely associating with men outside of the family circle. Naturally this custom made it necessary for the women members of every family to have a part of the home reserved for their exclusive use, in which men servants, trade people and friends of the male members of the family could not enter.

This section of the residence, which was large or small according to the family's means, was called the harem. Owing to the fact that no family names exist in Turkey, all the women members of a household were spoken of as belonging to the harem of so and so.

While the custom had some affinity to the tribal system, it included the man's mother, sister, daughters and servants who happened to live in his house. Many a wealthy Pasha had over 50 women in his harem, which does not in any way mean that they were married to him, or confined to his house by amorous captivity.

In this sense Kemal Pasha has a number of women who live in what could be called a harem; and aside from idle gossip and romantic implications the story of his five daughters, of their origin and education, sheds an interesting light on the enigmatic character of the Turkish leader.

They all have been legally adopted and have added the name Kemal to their own given name. They have a legitimate claim to their fosterfather's military family, inasmuch as they are orphans of Turkish officers, loyal to the republican cause, who lost their lives in one of the many wars in which Turkey has been engaged from 1908 to 1922.

With the exception of one, now married, who was really attractive, the others are in no way notable for their beauty, while all are equally well spoken of as having good minds, fine characters and virtue.

THE Gazi is doubtless a ladies' man: he could not claim descent from any Mediterranean race if he did not have a natural inclination and desire for the company of women. His prominence and real popularity in his own country would make it fairly easy for him to have a "harem" in the European sense of the word, without necessitating the formality of adoption.

But the typically Mediterranean feminism implies a constant desire for the particular atmosphere created by women. In Turkish families it will be found that the fathers expect a great deal from their sons and are often over-indulgent in regard to their daughters. In modern Turkey it can be noted that the service of women, not only for household duties but in public buildings, is preferred to men's.

In the old days, although men had their own quarters they always chose to live in the harem, which offered a much-needed contrast to the rest of their lives. In fact, men's clubs do not as yet have a place in the country's life, and the Gazi with his blue eyes and 100 per cent American appearance is at heart sufficiently oriental to want a home in which women place flowers in vases, serve coffee to his friends, tell him about their work and interests, offering a variety from his usual occupations.

It is perfectly true that Kemal Pasha's wedding to Latife Hanoum was a failure and that no children were born to them. It is less generally known that two of the five existing daughters were adopted by her when she was the Gazi's wife.

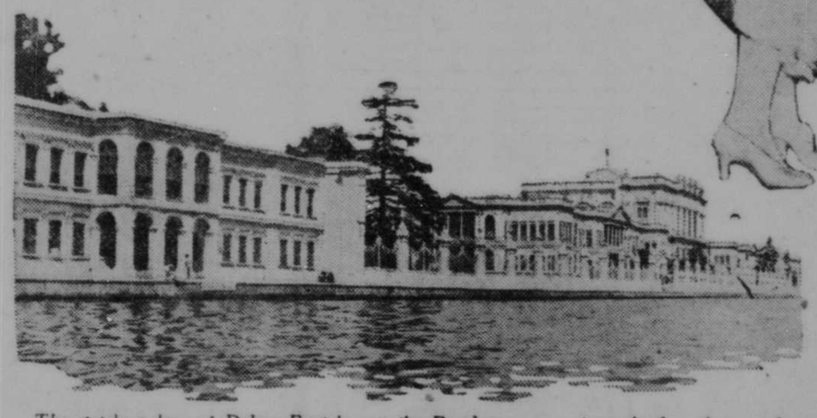
Notwithstanding its rapid dissolution, this marriage will always be recalled in the annals of Turkish feminism, inasmuch as by order of the bridegroom it was performed in western fashion. For the first time the face of the bride was seen by the many guests as well as by her betrothed, and her consent was not spoken from behind a closed door. Nothing of the sort could have happened in old Turkey.

Kemal Pasha further did not hesitate to have his wife accompany him in his long rides, and although she at first conformed to oriental habits by wearing a veil instead of a hat, she rode astride in a fashionable sport costume, and even when wearing the customary black "charchaf," her veil was thrown back and her face uncovered. The "charchaf" and veil have now almost disappeared from the larger cities, but all this took place in the very early days of the Kemal Pasha era.

A boat ride on the storied Bosphorus. . . . Kemal Pasha, seated beside one of his adopted daughters, goes for an outing.

The divorced wife of Kemal Pasha . . . Latife Hanoum, shown wearing the traditional Turkish "charchaf," minus the time-honored veil.

A modern jazz dance in oriental Istanbul . . . Kemal Pasha dancing with one of his adopted daughters, Nebile Hanoum.



The stately palace of Dolma Bagtche, on the Bosphorus . . . formerly the palace of the Sultan . . . now the summer residence of Kemal Pasha.

LATIFE HANOUM was young, intelligent and ambitious, and it is probable that her own strong personality clashed with the equally dominant ego of her husband. At any rate, no scandal marked their parting, arranged by mutual consent. The former wife now lives in Istanbul and has maintained the best of relations with the Gazi's friends.

No one would dare to speak slightingly of her in his presence, and many believe that her image and memory are in no way effaced from his heart. From time to time some enterprising publisher announces that Latife Hanoum is writing her memoirs or is going to give the press an interview on Turkish affairs. As a matter of fact, the lady has said nothing and written less.

Kemal Pasha provides entirely for the education and eventual dowery of the girls he has adopted, and is in this task assisted by his sister, Makbulle Hanoum, who acted as matron of honor when two of the girls were married.

The oldest and most prominent among the daughters is Affet Hanoum, who after graduating at a state school has become a music teacher in the Normal College at Ankara.

Affet Hanoum lives in the Gazi's house, and although most of her time is taken by her duties as a teacher, she helps him entertain his visitors and acted as hostess when he received the Grecian Prime Minister Venezielos.

While she takes no prominent part in any movement and declines to be interviewed, Affet Hanoum is said to advise her fosterfather on matters relating to education and philanthropy. Conservatively dressed and most business-like in deportment, she is seen each day at her school taking an active and earnest interest in her work.

THE girls who are now married were also educated in western fashion, and speak English as well as French. The first marriage ceremony took place in Dolma Bagtche, and for the first time the gilded hall of the Sultan's palace witnessed a ceremony in which Moslem men and women freely intermingled, and which was followed by jazz music to which the young people danced gaily.

The second marriage took place in Ankara, and a reception, to which all the diplomatic corps as well as state officials were invited, was given by the Gazi at the elaborate Ankara Palace Hotel. The bride, Nebil Hanoum, was the prettiest among the daughters; her husband, Taxim Bey, received an appointment as military attache in Vienna, where the couple now lives.

A little girl in her early teens is seen at the Tchankalia residence, and attends day school in Ankara, while Zehra Kemal is a student at the American Women's College in Istanbul. According to her teacher, "She is a lovely, modest, intelligent student: she exerts a definite influence for good over the school because of her high ideals of conduct, her simplicity of manner and the domestic friendliness of her associations."

It is certainly a departure from past traditions to have a number of young Moslem girls, and among them the adopted daughter of the republic's first citizen, assemble in an American school, study sociology and modern languages, and partake in games such as hockey and basketball attired in bloomers and sleeveless blouses.

Courses in Turkish literature and history are naturally included in the college curriculum, but emphasis is particularly laid on character building, and the pupils who end their training are regarded as the pioneers who will be called upon to take a leadership in the modern development and westernization of Turkey.

THE army and agriculture still remain the leading interests of the men, who are only gradually replacing the Greeks and Armenians in industry and trade. The Gazi is sufficiently a feminist to understand that the great experiment will either live or die according to the interest which women will take in it.

They will have to equip Turkey with the men and women which Turkey needs; they will have to furnish the soldiers, the peasants, the workmen, with the homes and background which will stand like a bulwark against the return of the Caliphat or the disintegration of the new form of nationalism on which the republic is founded.

Just recently Kemal Pasha adopted a small boy, the son of a fallen officer, and he may provide for other girls, once those to whom he has given a start have left his home to go their own way in life.

Outside of his official functions and journeys of inspection, the president of the republic leads a quiet and even somewhat lonely life.

A state residence for the president is among the many building projects of Ankara. For the present Kemal Pasha lives in his own house on the hill of Tchankalia, overlooking the new capital city. At a few miles from Ankara he has further purchased land and established a model farm for agricultural experiment.

WITH one or two of his daughters and his most intimate friends he is known to spend the week-end there, while the public is allowed to circulate in the park and admire the cows, long-haired goats and sheep, and the famous Ankara cats, with eyes of different color and long silky coats, which are being carefully bred on the farm.

It seems definitely established that the Gazi's daughters take no active part in Turkey's political life, and outside of a bond of affection and gratitude they are very distant from the leader's public career.

That they should manifest their gratitude by serving the country and helping in the development of republican institutions is naturally to be expected, but they are certainly no exception in either Ankara or Istanbul. Notwithstanding the economic strain and great difficulties encountered at each step, the sense of nationalism has definitely replaced the religious fanaticism of bygone days. There may be criticism of some policy, or desire for a change in certain legislative matters, but above all there is Turkey—new, progressive Turkey—of which the Gazi is the modern prophet.